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Schauer Press Release

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Schauer to Introduce Legislation to Help Protect Consumers Against Gas-Gouging

Bills will provide more tools for Attorney General to investigate, prosecute excessive prices

LANSING, Mich. - Tomorrow Senate Minority Leader Mark Schauer (D-Battle Creek) will introduce legislation that would give the attorney general additional tools to investigate price-fixing and gas-gouging at Michigan's gas pumps.

"The spike in gas prices this past weekend highlights the need to give law enforcement every tool available to ensure Michigan citizens are treated fairly," said Schauer. "These measures will strengthen the ability of the attorney general to go after anyone trying to take advantage of consumers."

The legislation would amend the Michigan Consumer Protection Act by giving the attorney general the ability to issue a civil investigative demand against companies believed to be in violation of the act without having to first obtain a court-ordered subpoena based on probable cause. With these amendments, the attorney general would be able to more efficiently investigate a potential violation of the act.

The legislation would also amend the Michigan Antitrust Reform Act to expand the ability of the attorney general and local prosecutors to investigate anti-competitive conduct by the state's retail gasoline industry by authorizing them to investigate and file actions based on possible violations of both state and federal antitrust laws.

As Hurricane Ike hit Texas this weekend, anxious motorists flocked to gas stations even as prices increased. Michigan's attorney general is reportedly already looking into more than 20 consumer complaints about possible gouging and states across the country are on the lookout for unscrupulous actions.

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